

REMARKS

Claims 1-11 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 1-5 are rejected, and claims 6-11 are withdrawn.

Claims 1-5 were examined on the merits. The only rejection is an indefiniteness rejection under §112, second paragraph. However, the foregoing amendment to claim 1 is believed to overcome the §112 rejection by clarifying that the “bottom region” is a region of the tire, and, thus, place all of the claims in condition for allowance.

In view of the preceding amendments and remarks, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby earnestly solicited. If there are any points remaining in issue that the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephonic interview, he is kindly requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the local telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.111
U.S. SERIAL NO. 09/918,449

ART UNIT 1732
Q65002

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees (except the Issue Fee and/or the Publication Fee) to our Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

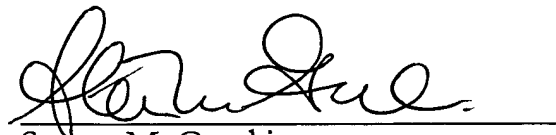
Respectfully submitted,

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

23373

CUSTOMER NUMBER


Steven M. Gruskin
Registration No. 36,818

Date: February 17, 2004